

Patricia H. Steffes  
35044 568<sup>th</sup> Street  
Rochester, MN 55906  
June 21, 2009

Stephanie Strength  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
USDA, Rural Utilities Service  
Engineering and Environmental Staff  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 1571  
Washington, DC 20250-1571

Dear Ms. Strength,

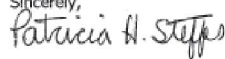
I am writing to you today to share with you my comments about a proposed 345,000 volt power line that is in the works for the state of Minnesota: specifically the CapX2020 (also referred to as the RUS-EIS). While I understand the need to supply the country with more power, I have great concerns about the path that this high-voltage line might take.

**I-184-001** In the area that I live (southeastern Minnesota) there is a proposed B-27 route that would cut through the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest. This pristine area includes many old trees (hardwoods) and is the habitat for many animals and birds—including a nesting area for the American Bald Eagle. Cutting the needed 150' path below this power line will have enormous negative impact on this state forest. There is an alternate route also planned that would fall a few miles south of this line (identified as B-28, B-111, B-91, B-93, B-161, B-162) that appears to only impact farm fields. It is my understanding that such a route could still have crops planted around it, creating much less harm to the environment.

**I-184-002** But there is something far more critical to the people in this area than the harmed wildlife, and that is the health and well-being of every man, woman, and child living in this neighborhood and the small town of Hammond. We are all worried about the connections that exist between electro-magnetic fields and childhood leukemia, Alzheimer's disease, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, and breast cancer to name a few. Even though scientists have yet to find the reason for the apparent links, the massive amount of research and undeniable increases in cancers in those areas high in EMF's cannot be ignored. And now research does show that EMF's attract and concentrate radon, a known carcinogen that is already in high concentrations in this part of the state. As a parent, I am gravely concerned. Even the representatives of the CapX2020 admitted that they would not want to have their home near one of these lines.

**I-184-003** If the EIS must be built, then at the very least, please consider having it NOT destroy our memorial hardwood forest. And please do NOT put it in such close proximity to neighborhoods like ours. Help me protect our children. Please drop the B-27 route and opt for the alternate one instead. Thank you for your time.

**I-184-004** You can contact me at any time at the above address, this phone number: 507-753-2009, and the following email: [pats@zmsch.k12.mn.us](mailto:pats@zmsch.k12.mn.us)

Sincerely,  
  
Patricia H. Steffes

#### **I-184-001**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### **I-184-002**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-184-003**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety with regard to EMF will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-184-004**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety with regard to EMF will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-184-005**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.